STPI has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the the Government of Orissa in the year 2005 to set up another centre in Berhampur.

As per the Government of Orissa, the above three cities *viz.* Bhubaneswar, Rourkela and Berhampur have been identified as major IT hubs of the State.

VSNL's partnership with South Africa

†3503. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd., a Central Government Undertaking is planning to start its operations by entering into a partnership in land line communication project in South Africa; and

(b) if so, the details of the countries with which Corporation has entered into agreements during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd. has reported that it has signed a Shareholders Agreement to have 51% stake in second fixed line operator of South Africa and has not entered into any other such agreement during the last three years. However, Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd. is no more a Central Government Undertaking since 13th February, 2002.

Revolution in Telecom Industry

3504. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to bear the cost of Rs. 1,000 crores for providing more spectrum to the Telecommunication industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.